

Do not support media ownership rules change

I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. In its supposed goals to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market, I strongly believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry, thereby protecting consumer choice.

I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. I know from my own personal experience that the media I have access to have become significantly less diverse in ownership than they were only a few years ago. While there may be indeed be more sources of media than ever before, I do not see that here. Additionally, the spectrum of views presented have become much more limited and I have had to make much more of an effort to be fully informed about current events.

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is part of the founding philosophy of our nation. Our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be significantly compromised.

The public interest, my own interest, will best be served by preserving media ownership rules in question in this proceeding.

In addition to the official hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA, I strongly urge the FCC to hold additional hearings elsewhere around the nation to solicit the widest possible participation from the public which will be the most directly affected by the outcomes of these decisions. I think it is important for the FCC to not only consider the points of view of those with a financial interest in this issue, but also those with a social or civic interest. I also have questions about the impact of the mergers that would be allowed on the cost of services to the consumer, since in my experience, monopolization leads directly to cost increases.

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is incumbent on the Commission to take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Sandra Kosek